

Step-by-Step Instructions for Nijushiho Kata (Shotokan Karate)

Nijushiho (also known as "24 Steps") is an advanced Shotokan kata characterized by dynamic, flowing movements, changes in tempo, and a mix of smooth and explosive techniques. Below is a step-by-step breakdown based on expert tutorials and detailed video explanations^{[1] [2] [3] [4]}.

Opening and First Sequence

- Begin with the formal bow (rei), then move to yoi (ready stance).
- Step back with your left foot into a left back stance (kokutsu dachi) while executing a left pressing block (osae uke) with your left hand^[1].
- Without rising, perform a right reverse punch (gyaku zuki) in half stance^[1].
- Draw your left hand under, pointing your elbow forward, and move into sanchin dachi (hourglass stance)^{[1] [2]}.

Double Hand Strike and Transition

- Turn right, maintaining sanchin dachi, cross your arms, and execute a double strike: one hand jodan (high), one hand chudan (middle)^{[1] [2]}.
- Guard, drawing forearms and knee to center, then double block in zenkutsu dachi (front stance)^[1].
- Wind up, perform a left rising block (age uke), followed by a rising elbow strike (empi)^[1].

Kiba Dachi and Vertical Hand Blocks

- Shift right leg into kiba dachi (horse stance) with a vertical hand block to the right^[1].
- Repeat the same movement to the left^[1].

Cross and Press Blocks

- Cross your left leg behind, press block with your right hand, then shift to fudo dachi (rooted stance), hands stacked (one up, one down)^[1].

Heito and Key Techniques

- Turn and block with left hand, then heito (ridge hand) to the opponent^[1].
- Right hand up, left hand back, both open palms, then keyai (shout) as left hand slams down^[1].

Throw and Ground Finish

- Simulate throwing your opponent by slamming down and dropping into kokutsu dachi^[1].
- Double punch to finish^[1].

Corner Transitions and Elbow Strikes

- Wind up to the rear left corner, left hand open, shift into kiba dachi, rising elbow strike under opponent's chin^{[1] [2]}.
- Wind up for downward block, repeat on the other side^{[1] [2]}.
- Step forward, execute elbow strike, then strike with right hand, shift to the next corner, strike, and downward block^{[1] [2]}.

Return to Center and Final Techniques

- Take a large step with your right leg to return to the center line, hands together^{[1] [2]}.
- Step forward into right sanchin dachi, right hand loops over, left hand on top, push down with left (jodan) and right (chudan)^[2].
- Step back to yamae (finish stance)^[2].

Key Points for Practice

- **Timing and Rhythm:** Nijushiho alternates between smooth, slow moves and sharp, explosive actions. Pay attention to the transitions and tempo changes^{[2] [4]}.
- **Stance Work:** The kata uses a variety of stances-kokutsu dachi, sanchin dachi, kiba dachi, fudo dachi, and zenkutsu dachi. Focus on correct posture and weight distribution^{[2] [4]}.
- **Hand Techniques:** Includes pressing blocks, double strikes, rising blocks, elbow strikes, vertical hand blocks, and heito. Each should be performed with precision and intent^{[1] [2]}.
- **Breathing and Focus:** Coordinate breathing with movements, especially during slow transitions and explosive techniques^{[2] [4]}.

For visual learners, detailed step-by-step video tutorials are available and highly recommended for mastering the precise movements and transitions of Nijushiho kata^{[1] [2] [3] [4]}.



Notable Women in Shotokan Karate

Pioneers and Influential Figures

- **Pauline Laville-Bindra:** Widely recognized as a pioneer for women in Shotokan, she was the first woman in Britain to earn a JKA (Japan Karate Association) black belt in Karate (1967). Laville-Bindra went on to become one of the highest-ranked female Shotokan practitioners globally, eventually reaching 8th dan. She faced significant gender barriers in her early days, often being excluded from competitions in the UK and even having to compete against men in international events, where she placed highly. Beyond her personal achievements, she played a major role in founding karate governing bodies in the UK and influenced generations of instructors and students^{[5] [6]}.
- **Sensei Pauline Bindra:** Also known as Pauline Laville-Bindra, she was instrumental in the growth of karate in the UK, holding senior posts such as National Secretary and Treasurer, and leading technical committees. She was one of the highest graded women in the world of karate and helped establish some of the largest karate groups in the 1970s^{[7] [5]}.

- **Cathy Cline:** The first woman in Shotokan Karate to earn both seventh and eighth dan promotions in the United States. Cline has been a leader in promoting women's participation in karate, organizing self-defense classes for women and emphasizing the mental and spiritual benefits of martial arts. Her achievements have served as inspiration and paved the way for female practitioners in the art^[8].

Competitive Success

- Shotokan’s global tournament scene has seen many women rise to prominence, especially in kata and kumite divisions. Notable champions include:
 - **Yuko Hasama, Yukiko Yoneda, Hiromi Hasama, Mayumi Baba, Hiromi Kawashima, Yoko Nakamura, Miyoko Fujiwara, Nakata Terumi, Misako Aragaki, Nozomi Oshima, Ayano Nakamura,** and **Saori Ishibashi**-all of whom have won or placed in major international kata and kumite competitions^[9].

Impact and Growth

- Women’s participation in Shotokan has grown steadily since the 1970s, with female practitioners now prominent at all levels, from local dojos to international championships. Early pioneers like Pauline Laville-Bindra and Cathy Cline helped break down barriers, making Shotokan accessible and respected for women worldwide^{[7] [8] [5] [6]}.

Community and Support

- Shotokan organizations and dojos continue to promote inclusivity, offering classes and events geared toward women and encouraging their involvement in leadership, competition, and instruction^[10].

Summary Table: Key Female Figures in Shotokan

Name	Country	Key Achievements
Pauline Laville-Bindra	UK/USA	First female JKA black belt in Britain, 8th dan, pioneer, founder of governing bodies
Cathy Cline	USA	First US woman to 7th/8th dan, technical committee leader, advocate for women
Yuko Hasama	Japan	Multiple-time kumite champion
Yoko Nakamura	Japan	Multiple-time kata champion
Saori Ishibashi	Japan	2024 kata world champion

These women, among many others, have shaped the landscape of Shotokan Karate, inspiring new generations of female martial artists^{[5] [9]}.



1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZE8EqPvwruE>
2. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jNAfRg-2Mr8>
3. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tKBjYveV_dg

4. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u6QpaHul07s>
5. <http://findingkarate.com/wordpress/spotlight-pauline-laville-bindra-shotokans-tigress/>
6. <https://www.cfts-karate.co.uk/post/shotokan-timeline>
7. <https://www.iskkarate.com/history/>
8. <https://maytt.home.blog/2020/06/10/interview-with-secretary-of-technical-committee-cathy-cline/>
9. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Japan_Karate_Association
10. <https://www.tahoedailytribune.com/news/karate-event-g geared-toward-women/>